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THOMAS DAWSON TO LADY GOOCH.

(From Dawson manuscripts, Library of Congress.)

[Draft of a letter]

Wm. & Mary Coll: Janry 11th-1758.

Dear Madam,

This is my third Letter, since I had the Pleasure of a Line from Your Ladyship, but I had much rather offend by being Troublesome, than in the Neglect of my Duty: In my first I gave you an Account of my several Visits to the Burying Place, which still remains indeed in the same Manner it was, but the Door is constantly locked, the Key kept at Mr. Smiths who always readily favoured me with it, and the House not in the least abused; and that Gentleman has solemnly promised me again and again, that the least Indignity shall never be offered to it: In, my second, which indeed I know was carried into France, among many other particulars, I acquainted you with my having a Daughter, baptized by the Name of Rebecca, Your Ladyship, (by Mrs. Dawson Your Proxy) and the Governor and his Lady, Sponsors.—As to News, or any Thing else, I can write at present, I think it would be impertinent, because Mrs. Dinwiddie, for I hope you will have the Pleasure of seeing one another, will be able to answer you 1000 Questions, and inform you of 1000 Things, which might not occur to me: And tho' my Lady Gooch there has not, God be thanked, Happened in their Family, any of those tender & affecting Incidents, which frequently endear us one to another, and laid indeed the first Foundation of our sincere & lasting Friendship; yet I assure you I am sincerely concerned at their Departure, and could have heartily wished, had it been consistent with the Governor's Health, that they had remained much longer amongst us. For their courteous and affable Behaviour made them easy and agreeable to all their Acquaintances, and particularly endeared them to those, who had the Happiness of their particular Regard and Friendship. As to my Wife she has been almost as much affected upon this Occasion, as a certain Gentleman was, upon the Departure of Sir W Gooch and his Family.

And now I have mentioned my Wife, I must give you some Account of my own Family; Tho' the Bearer, to whom I refer you for News, knows none better, nor favoured none more with her company. First then, as to Mrs. Dawson, she continues a good natured Girl, & endeavours to please her Husband; Bill a smart promising Boy, goes to School now & then, and has for some Time been a very great Courtier: Beck at present a little big bellied Girl, but will in Time I hope be a buxom Lass: Tom a very little Boy, like an Ancient of that Name in Miniature, but I hope he will soon outstrip him, and meet with none of his most terrible misfortunes. And as to Head of the House he is as heretofore sometimes sick & sometimes well, sometimes chearful, & sometimes sad; but in all States & Conditions of Life, he and the whole Family have the greatest Esteem and Veneration for Lady Gooch, and are intirely at her Devotion. My Wife joins with me in wishing Your Ladyship at this Season of Life all the temporal Advantages of Religion to which you are so justly intitled; and the eternal Reward of it, when Time shall be no more. As I am much hurried at this Time, I can only add, that with the greatest Respect, Duty and Gratitude, I am,

Dear Madam,

Your most affect: & most obedient Servant,

Thomas Dawson.¹

¹Rev. Thomas Dawson was chosen President of the College in 1755 after the death of Rev. Wm. Stith. He was President until his death Dec. 5, 1761.